Ministry of Social Services

Plan for 2016-17

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Government of Saskatchewan

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Statement from the Minister

The Honourable Donna Harpauer

Minister of Social Services

I am pleased to present the Ministry of Social Services' Plan for 2016-17 and beyond. The plan identifies the key actions we will undertake to support our Plan for Growth and vision for the future of our province.

Government Direction and Budget for 2016-17 invests in people and infrastructure to *Keep Saskatchewan Strong*, and initiates a government-wide exercise of transformational change to ensure the sustainability of high quality public services delivered in the most effective and efficient way possible.

The Ministry of Social Services works with a diverse range of partners to build safe, dynamic community resources in order to promote inclusion and enhance the quality of life for our province's most vulnerable residents.

We will continue our commitment to the renewal of the child welfare system with our First Nations and Métis partners, including a focus on enhancing our prevention supports so more children can remain with their families.

We will continue our work to implement Saskatchewan's Disability Strategy and our commitment to make our province the best place in Canada for people experiencing disabilities.

Through the work of the province's Poverty Reduction Strategy, we will work with community-based organizations, the Federal Government, and individuals across the province to ensure there are supports and services available to help citizens improve their quality of life and find a way out of poverty.

In the coming year, we will continue to work closely with our partners in the housing sector to implement the Housing Strategy for Saskatchewan and increase the supply and affordability of homes in the province.

The plan includes many more initiatives which will contribute to improving the quality of life for Saskatchewan's most vulnerable citizens.

The Ministry will report on progress made toward this plan, within the financial parameters provided, in the 2016-17 Annual Report.

Response to Government Direction

The Government of Saskatchewan is committed to building on Saskatchewan's foundational strengths, investing in needed infrastructure and in vital programs and services for the people of our province. The Government has made a simple yet significant commitment – to *Keep Saskatchewan Strong*. This year marks the beginning of a government-wide exercise of transformational change to ensure the sustainability of high quality public services delivered in the most effective, efficient way possible.

This focus will advance Government toward the realization of Saskatchewan's Vision and goals.

Saskatchewan's Vision

"... to be the best place in Canada – to live, to work, to start a business, to get an education, to raise a family and to build a life."

Sustaining growth and opportunities for Saskatchewan people

Meeting the challenges of growth

Securing a better quality of life for all Saskatchewan people

Delivering responsive and responsible government

Saskatchewan's Vision and goals provide the framework for ministries, agencies and third parties to align their programs and services and meet the needs of Saskatchewan's residents.

All ministries and agencies will report on progress in their 2016-17 annual reports.

Operational Plan

Mandate Statement

The Ministry helps children be safe from abuse and neglect, and individuals to meet their basic needs and participate in their community.

Mission Statement

We deliver programs and services that help people in need achieve a better quality of life.

Government Goals

Sustaining growth and opportunities for Saskatchewan people

Meeting the challenges of growth

Securing a better quality of life for all Saskatchewan people

Delivering responsive and responsible government

Ministry Goal

Programs and services set the foundation to meet our clients' basic needs

Strategy

Children in out-of-home care are safe, have stability, and make successful life transitions

Key Actions

- Continue the work on child welfare legislation to ensure regulations support contemporary social values and enable best practices in services and supports for children, caregivers, and families; and seek approval of amendments through the legislative process
- Strengthen family- and community-based supports for children and youth in care

Performance Measure

Proportion of children in out-of-home care placed with extended family members or persons of sufficient interest

By March 31, 2018, 45 per cent of children in out-of-home care are in these types of placements

Strategy

Housing is available for individuals and families in greatest need

Key Actions

- Increase the efficiency and sustainability of the public housing system:
  - Continue to transition the Affordable Rental Housing Program to the Social Rental Housing Program
  - Increase the cost-effectiveness of the housing system and ensure consistent, high quality client service
- Continue to work with northern communities and stakeholders to respond to housing needs in the north and increase capacity of northern communities to plan for housing

Performance Measures

Provincial housing vacancy rate

A three per cent vacancy rate is maintained through March 31, 2020

Vacancy rate in Saskatchewan's ten largest communities

One hundred per cent of Saskatchewan's ten largest communities have a three per cent vacancy rate by March 31, 2020

Tenant satisfaction ratings

By March 31, 2019, the Saskatchewan Housing Corporation has a tenant satisfaction rating of 90 per cent

Strategy

People experiencing disabilities have improved quality of life and are included in their communities

Key Actions

- Continue to transition people living at Valley View Centre to homes in the community
- Begin to implement recommendations from the provincial Disability Strategy
- Strengthen supports for people experiencing disability, their families, and caregivers:
  - Review the array of residential and respite services for people experiencing disability
  - Continue to implement and evaluate the Self-Directed Funding demonstration project that allows individuals with intellectual disabilities and their families greater choice and control over their disability supports and services
  - Review the Cognitive Disability Strategy to better understand and improve the services provided through this program
  - Expand community-based crisis prevention and outreach supports
  - Improve Community Living Service Delivery case management practices

Performance Measures

Enrolment in the Saskatchewan Assured Income for Disability program

Enrolment is two per cent or less of the provincial population through to March 31, 2020

Valley View Centre Residents

By March 31, 2018, there are no residents remaining at Valley View Centre

Government Goals

Sustaining growth and opportunities for Saskatchewan people

Meeting the challenges of growth

Securing a better quality of life for all Saskatchewan people

Delivering responsive and responsible government

Ministry Goal

Citizens gain independence through self-reliance and prevention

Strategy

People experiencing low income have improved quality of life through strengthened programs and services

Key Action

- Begin to implement the Saskatchewan Poverty Reduction Strategy

Performance Measure

Number of Saskatchewan people who experience poverty

By March 31, 2025, the number of Saskatchewan people who experience poverty for two years or more will be reduced by 50 per cent

Strategy

Families are supported to safely care for their children

Key Action

- Expand the types of interventions available to respond to reports of child neglect and abuse

Performance Measure

Number of children entering out-of-home care due to neglect

By March 31, 2018, ten per cent fewer children enter out-of-home care due to neglect

Strategy

Quality preventative community-based supports are available for vulnerable individuals and families

Key Action

- Continue to work with the Community-Based Organization (CBO) sector on the multi-year implementation of the CBO Sustainability Plan

Strategy

Affordable housing is available and accessible for Saskatchewan citizens

Key Actions

- Increase the efficiency and sustainability of the public housing system:
  - Define the Saskatchewan Housing Corporation's (SHC's) target populations and how to best serve them
  - Target Investment in Affordable Housing (IAH) funding to best serve SHC's target population
- Implement the First Home Plan for Graduate Retention Program recipients
- Implement the Seniors Education Property Tax Deferment Program

Strategy

Clients on income assistance make sustainable transitions to employment

Key Action

- Redesign income assistance programs to:
  - simplify programs
  - enhance client-centred service
  - strengthen referral processes for employable clients to employment services and community supports

Performance Measures

Income assistance enrolment rate

Through March 31, 2020, the enrolment rate in the Saskatchewan Assistance Program and the Transitional Employment Allowance does not exceed three per cent of the provincial population of 0 to 64 year-olds living off-reserve

Proportion of income assistance clients who use the program for six months or less

By March 31, 2018, 65 per cent of clients without barriers to employment leave income assistance within six months of enrolment

Government Goals

- Sustaining growth and opportunities for Saskatchewan people
- Meeting the challenges of growth
- Securing a better quality of life for all Saskatchewan people
- **Delivering responsive and responsible government**

Ministry Goal

Our people and our organization are effective and efficient

Strategy

Delivery of Ministry programs and services is innovative and accountable

Key Action

- Develop effective pay-for-performance funding mechanisms for service delivery partners

Strategy

Our culture demonstrates our commitment to excellence

Key Actions

- Develop a communication and engagement strategy to effectively communicate, engage, and promote cultural values across diverse employee groups
- Continue to implement the Ministry's Safety Action Plan
- Develop a plan to improve representation and inclusion of diverse employee groups in the Ministry's workforce

Performance Measures

Employee Engagement Index

By March 31, 2018, the employee engagement index will reach 70 per cent

Workforce safety

By March 31, 2019, the workforce injury rate will be five per cent or less

Workforce diversity

By March 31, 2018, the workforce representation of employee groups meets or exceeds Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission targets

Strategy

Ministry physical and information technology supports are modern

Key Actions

- Continue to implement information technology disaster recovery plans to support business continuity
- Enhance reporting through the Ministry's case management system

Highlights

The Government of Saskatchewan is working to *Keep Saskatchewan Strong* by investing in people including the most vulnerable citizens in our province. The Ministry of Social Services' 2016-17 budget ensures programs and services will continue to be available for individuals, children, and families in need of social supports. Highlights of the Ministry's budget include:

Income Assistance and Disability Supports

Our 2016-17 budget provides:

- Additional funding of $9.7 million to the Saskatchewan Assured Income for Disability program. This increase recognizes the continued growth in the program and government's commitment to work towards making Saskatchewan the best place in Canada for people living with disabilities.
- $153.6 million for the Saskatchewan Assistance Plan, a decrease of $5.6 million from last year due primarily to all new fully employable clients being directed to the Transitional Employment Allowance program.
- $19.5 million increase for the Transitional Employment Allowance program as a policy change has resulted in more clients being directed to the Transitional Employment Allowance than the Saskatchewan Assistance Program.
- $12.6 million for the Saskatchewan Employment Supplement, a decrease of $2.5 million. In 2015-16, the Saskatchewan Employment Supplement was changed to target the supplement to applicants with children 12 years old and under. However, there was a grandfathering provision, leaving families who were already in the program eligible to receive support for children 13 years and older. The grandfathering provision, which accounts for a portion of this year's reduction in the Saskatchewan Employment Supplement funding, is now being removed to focus the program on families with the highest need.
- $0.3 million decrease in the Seniors Income Plan due to estimated lower caseloads in the upcoming year.

Another $3.4 million will address the emerging needs of those with intellectual disabilities and support the transition of individuals from Valley View Centre as homes and programs become available.

Child and Family Services

In 2016-17, the Ministry will continue working to keep families strong with investment in Child and Family Services. Increased support in the coming year includes the following:

- $5.7 million increase for foster care and extended family care.
- $4.2 million for private treatment spaces.
- $3.7 million in funding for medically fragile children in response to calls from the Provincial Auditor and Advocate for Children and Youth for better identification of needs and provision of services to children with complex needs.
- $2.3 million in individualized preventative services to keep children from coming into the care of the Minister.
- $0.8 million for Assisted Adoption to provide maintenance payments and special needs benefits for children who would otherwise be wards of the Province.

Housing

The 2016-17 Ministry budget continues the Province's commitment to the Saskatchewan Advantage Housing Plan and to the Housing Strategy for Saskatchewan to provide better access to safe, quality and affordable housing for Saskatchewan people. Government will continue to support the federal-provincial Affordable Housing Agreement. This Agreement has been extended until 2019 and is to be used for new affordable housing supply, home renovations, home adaptations, and rent/housing supplements.

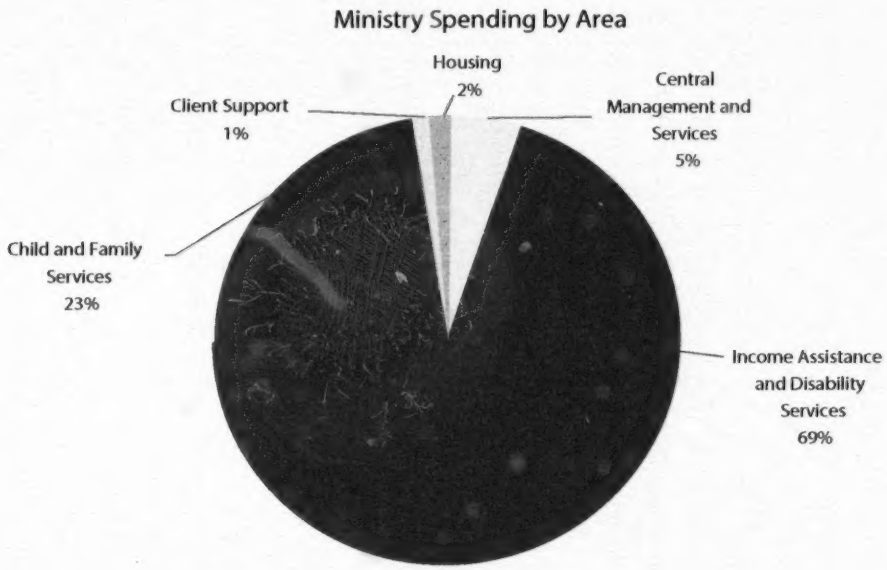
Included in the 2016-17 budget is funding for a new commitment, the introduction of the First Home Plan through the Graduate Retention Program. This will be the first year for this program.

Financial Summary

2016-17 Estimates	(in thousands of dollars)
Central Management and Services	49,347
Income Assistance and Disability Services	726,200
Child and Family Services	242,911
Client Support	12,193
Housing	18,771
Ministry Appropriation	**1,049,422**
Capital Asset Acquisitions	(3,525)
Non-Appropriated Expense Adjustment	6,343
Ministry Expense	**1,052,240**

FTE Staff Complement	1,706.7

For more information, see the Budget Estimates at: http://www.saskatchewan.ca/budget



For More Information

Please visit the Ministry's website at http://www.saskatchewan.ca/government/government-structure/ministries/social-services